Supply of Inferior Quality of Foodgrains by FCI

1722. SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Director General of Investigation and Registration (DGIR) filed an application with the Monopolies & Restrictive Trade Practices Commission (MRTPC) for action against FCI for allegedly supplying inferior quality of foodgrains for the PDS;

(b) if so, the details of the complaint;

(c) the details of action taken thereon; and

(d) the details of fresh initiative taken to ensure that the quality of foodgrains is not tampered with by the vested interests?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Director General of Investigation and Registration (DGIR) has filed an application with the Monopolies & Restrictive Trade Practices Commission (MRTPC) on the ground that the Food Corporation of India has over-charged the consumers in the State of Kerala.

The application of DGIR is based on the C&AG Report that the Food Corporation of India has overcharged the consumers by issuing lower group of rice in higher group, in the State of Kerala. The C&AG has alleged that the FCI has earned an amount of Rs. 418.71 lakhs and customers have been over-charged to that extent.

(c) The Food Corporation of India has given a detailed reply to the MRTPC listing therein the procedure being followed in the issue, of rice under Public Distribution System. As per the procedure foodgrains are moved from the procuring States to the consuming States and the stocks so despatched should contain the details of the group of stocks. In the case of loss of despatching documents in transit, the group of stocks is determined on the basis of the result of spot analysis by a Committee of Officers. This becomes inevitable because waiting for the despatched documents would result in delay in the issue of foodgrains. The spot analysis has resulted into upgradation of rice in 0.03% cases and down-gradation in 0.003% cases. The error could happen either way.

(d) As a remedial action, to avoid recurrence of such cases, instructions have been issued by the Food Corporation of India that the stocks of foodgrains without despatching details will be issued only after confirmation of the group of the despatched stocks.

Insurgency in NER

1723. SHRI KESHAB MAHANTA : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "North East going the Kashmir way' appearing in the Assam Tribune', dated February 16, 1997

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) are increasing its activities because of the alarming increase of Muslim population in the region;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken to check their scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The activities of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) are kept under surveillance and appropriate decisions taken from time to time.

(c) and (d) Links of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence with some of the Nort-East insurgent groups and Muslim fundamentalist groups have come to notice. A close watch is being kept on their activities.

(e) Intelligence machinery for collection, analysis and sharing of information has been improved and there is better coordination between the various agencies.

Death of Elephants Due to Starvation

1724. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the report appearing in the 'Statesman' dated December 30, 1996 that a large number of elephants in the Kazhiranga and Manas reserves of Assam have starved to death during the past six months but for non-payment of bills for elephant feed to its suppliers;

(b) if so, number of elephants who died due to starvation and otherwise in Assam and in other States during the said period and in the preceeding two spells of six months each; and

(c) the action taken in the matter and the steps proposed to be taken to preserve this majestic animal ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) The Government has seen the newspaper report in the Statesman of December 30, 1996. The State Government has reported that there is no death of departmental elephants by starvation during 1995-96.

(b) The information on captive elephants in India is not compiled or collated in this Ministry as large number of elephants are owned by private individuals and organisations. The number of wild elephants reported to have died due to natural causes and poaching is given in the Statement enclosed.

(c) To preserve the majestic animal, the elephant have been placed under the Schedule I of the Wild Life